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The United States Agency for International Development

Office of PVC - Overview

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Overview

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-Child Survival

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PVC'S ROLE IN THE AGENCY



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**** Overview ****

The Office of Private and Voluntary Cooperation (PVC) plays a dual role in USAID. Through the programs it administers, PVC provides direct support to efforts made by the U.S. PVO community (**PVOs**) and by its local partners (**NGOs**) to address critical needs in developing countries and emerging democracies.

Through support for US PVOs, PVC also aims to strengthen the capacity of local NGOs and community groups to deliver sustainable services, particularly to underserved communities. The primary way PVC supports its mission is through the competitive grant programs it administers. These include **Matching Grant**, **Child Survival Grants**, **Cooperative Development Grants**, the **Farmer-to-Farmer Program**, and **Ocean Freight Reimbursement**. PVC also coordinates the **Denton Program** which is jointly administered by USAID, the Department of State, and the Department of Defense. In addition, PVC administers USAID's **Development Education Program** which provides grants to US organizations to educate the American public about developing country needs and about the ways in which US foreign assistance, and the efforts of the PVO community, help to address those needs.

PVOs and their local partners also benefit from PVC's information and program support function including the **registration of US PVOs**. PVC also registers **local private voluntary organizations** (LPVOs) Non-US PVO Section that wish to work with USAID Missions overseas. In addition, PVC monitors the degree to which US PVOs are maintaining their private funding base.

PVC fulfills its liaison and information functions for other offices within USAID on both the policy and operational levels. PVC provides information on PVO capabilities and programs to the public and to other USAID operating units. PVC also helps to promote better integration of PVO programs with USAID mission strategies. The office does so primarily through the grant program guidelines it issues, which require mission comment and clearance on all proposals to ensure that the PVO programs funded by PVC are consistent with missions' strategic objectives. On the policy level, PVC plays a key role in the development of Agency policies that focus on the USAID-PVO partnership. PVC's involvement in policy formulation ranges from the broadest levels, such as on USAID's New Partnerships Initiative (NPI), to operational guidance for program managers, such as on cost-sharing requirements, to addressing issues that affect PVOs in the area of procurement policy. PVC also contributes to the policy dialogue in its role as the secretariat for **Agency's Advisory Committee on Voluntary Foreign Aid (ACVFA)**

**** Competitive Review Process****

All eligible proposals responding to the Request for Applications (RFAs) are reviewed by a formal review committee comprised of participants from USAID/BHR/PVC and from regional and central bureaus. External technical consultants are also used by the review committees. From the date of submission, the review process alone takes from three to five months. Recommended proposals then undergo budget negotiation with USAID's agreement officer, who issues the final awards.

** BHR/PVC Strategic Plan **

The strategic plan developed by BHR/PVC reflects the values and practices promoted by the reengineering initiative at USAID. Teamwork and the involvement of PVC's partners in the US PVO community were integral to its development. The office's results framework, on which this plan is based, reflects their shared objectives. PVC's grant programs support the overall Agency goal of sustainable development.

Results Framework

| | |
|----------------------------|---|
| GOAL | Sustainable Development Impacts in Priority Sectors |
| Sub-Goal | NGOs and Other Local Partners Strengthened |
| Strategic Objective | <u>Increased Capability</u> of PVCs PVO Partners to Achieve Sustainability Service Delivery |

Intermediate Results

| | | | | |
|--|---|--|---|---------------------------------|
| 1. Operational & Technical Capacity of PVC's Grantees Improved | 2. Strengthened Partnership Between USAID and U.S. PVOs | 3. Strengthened Partnership Between U.S. PVOs and Local NGOs | 4. Improved Mobilization of Resources by PVC's PVO Partners | 5. U.S. Public Awareness Raised |
|--|---|--|---|---------------------------------|

For more information, review [PVC's Strategic Plan](#) (PDF 2.5MB)

PVC's strategic plan builds on the historical strengths and comparative advantages of the office. For 20 years, PVC's support to the PVO community has focused on the institutional capacity these organizations need to develop to achieve the objectives of programs they undertake in developing countries and emerging democracies. PVC's relationship with the PVO community differs from the type of relationship a USAID mission develops with a PVO. Mission funding of PVOs is normally oriented to the implementation of development programs. To compete for this type of funding, PVOs must already have, or be engaged in ongoing efforts to build, the capacity that is needed for development work. PVC is uniquely positioned within USAID to provide this type of capacity-building assistance to the PVO community. This is reflected in the integration of the **Agency's five objectives** in PVC program activities.

Over the years, PVC's grants have helped many within the PVO community to develop their institutional capacities to the point where they are capable of running the kinds of programs USAID missions fund and are working effectively on the cutting edge of development in priority sectors. In selecting its strategic objective for the period covered by this plan, PVC's aim was to focus on capacity building not as an end in itself, but rather as the means, or foundation, for ensuring that its grant programs result in the provision of needed goods and services to people in the countries USAID assists. At the level of its strategic objective, PVC's interest goes beyond the institutional capacity of individual PVOs. What is important from a development perspective is the continuous improvement in the capability of the PVO community as a whole to respond effectively to the full range of challenges facing developing countries.

Reflecting this focus, PVC has selected a single strategic objective (SO) that draws together a number of critical and interconnected concerns. This objective calls for the: Increased capability of PVC's PVO partners to achieve sustainable service delivery. This objective has three interrelated aspects. The first important aspect of this objective is its focus on improving the **capacity or collective capability of the US PVO community**. Improvements in the capability of US PVOs are viewed by PVC as being inextricably linked to service delivery improvements, irrespective of whether these services are being provided by PVOs directly or by their local NGO partners. Service delivery is the second important aspect of PVC's SO. Its inclusion in the objective statement forces PVC and its PVO partners to focus on and measure performance in these terms. The provision of goods and services does not guarantee that the kinds of development impacts USAID seeks will occur, but it is an essential prerequisite for such impact. The final aspect of PVC's SO is the

expectation that services will be delivered on a sustainable basis. The delivery of needed goods and services must be organized in ways that do not depend upon perpetual support from USAID or other donors. PVC's SO is realistically limited to PVC's PVO partners. PVC directly affects only those members of the PVO community with which it is in contact. Indirectly, however, improvements that result from PVC's work with a limited set of PVOs should have a ripple effect in the PVO community as a whole.

By incorporating all of these important and interrelated aspects of PVO capability to provide sustainable service delivery into its SO, PVC is establishing a clear and direct link between the office's work, and that of its PVO partners, and the kinds of impact that BHR and USAID are broadly seeking. For this reason, PVC has selected sustainable development impacts in priority sectors as its goal. This goal is consistent with, and essential for, the achievement of USAID's overall aim of sustainable development. In the process of developing this plan in consultation with its PVO partners, it became apparent to PVC that a number of PVOs have stepped away from direct service delivery and are working increasingly with NGOs and other local partners to address development priorities. Although PVC wanted to incorporate these efforts to strengthen NGOs and other local partners into its results framework, it viewed the achievement of this type of objective as being one step beyond its manageable interest at the time. To accommodate this situation, PVC decided to establish a separate subgoal that reflects the diversity of approaches employed by PVC grantees. This subgoal, which is pertinent for most but not all PVC grantee programs, aims at seeing NGOs and other local partners strengthened. In placing this subgoal along the results path that leads from the SO to the office's goal, PVC is saying that programs can either go through this subgoal, and contribute to its achievement along the way, or they can go around it, as is the case when a PVO or CDO directly delivers services that support broad USAID objectives.

Increasing the capability of PVC's PVO partners to achieve sustainable service delivery encompasses a systematic move away from direct service delivery by US PVOs and progressively toward the enhanced service-delivery capacity and increased autonomy of their local partners. Inherent in this objective is the transfer of skills and technologies to NGOs. PVC will continue to support efforts toward the "localization" of US PVO country programs while placing increased emphasis on strengthening nonaffiliated NGOs and local government partners. By concentrating on helping its partners "achieve" sustainable development rather than "deliver" services, PVC is "enabling" support for local transfer to happen. PVC has taken care to emphasize "achieve" because its partners work in a variety of ways to ensure the delivery of services. Both the concentration on PVO capacity and transfer to local counterparts are linked to achieving better service delivery. Through matching grant guidelines for 1996, PVC began to encourage PVOs to form partnerships with local counterpart organizations using structured agreements that detail the roles and responsibilities of both parties. PVC is building on that foundation by calling on PVOs whose programs PVC supports to strengthen the participation of local partner organizations in their programs. PVC has learned that many of its partner PVOs are already engaged in the transfer of skills and resources to NGOs. PVC's role in facilitating local capacity building is to assist PVOs along this path. It is at the subgoal level that PVC is focusing on the important area of NGO strengthening, facilitating the inclusion of local capacity development in PVO programs and encouraging the transfer of PVO resources to local counterparts.

Supporting the achievement of its SO, and the subgoal and goal that reach beyond the level of PVC's manageable interest, are five intermediate results (IRs), each of which contributes to the achievement of PVC's SO. These IRs build on the traditional strengths of the office while cutting across the grant programs PVC manages in a way that PVC anticipates will be both catalytic and synergistic. The five IRs on which PVC will concentrate its efforts include the following:

- **Operational and Technical Capacity of US PVOs Improved.** This IR focuses on the capacity of the individual PVOs and CDOs with which PVC works. Improvements in the professional skills of PVO staff as well as in organizational systems and the application of "best practices" are envisioned.
- **Strengthened Partnership between USAID and US PVOs.** This IR recognizes the importance of dialogue and collaboration in the relationship between USAID and US PVOs. It builds upon the catalytic role that PVC has played in promoting policy and programmatic improvements that are already being forged between the Agency and the PVO community.
- **Strengthened US PVO and NGO Partnership.** This IR reaffirms the importance of strengthening NGO capacity and building upon the efforts that many PVOs are already making to structure partnerships that help shift the capability and the responsibility for sustainable service delivery to their NGO partners.
- **Improved Mobilization of Resources by PVC's PVO Partners.** This IR acknowledges the

need for greater efforts on the part of the PVO community to diversify its income sources. The IR envisions steps PVC can take to assist PVOs in mobilizing the resources that will be needed to expand upon current programs and promote sustainability.

- **US Public Awareness Raised.** This IR focuses on the responsibility that PVC and the PVO community share with respect to ensuring that the American people understand the intentions and impact of development programs, particularly those that US PVOs and their local NGO partners carry out in collaboration with USAID.

PVC's strategic objective and the results framework of which it is a part reflect the office's primary mission: to strengthen the development capabilities of US PVOs. PVC's results framework also includes a focus on the results that actually reach people. At the SO level, the phrase "achieve sustainable service delivery" is intended to suggest the importance PVC places on seeing both PVOs and their NGO partners produce measurable service delivery outcomes. Microenterprise credit programs supported by Matching Grants, for example, should result in loans to entrepreneurs who might not otherwise have access to credit. Service delivery is a clear objective of the PVC plan, and a primary responsibility of PVC grantees, at the SO level.

**** PVC Results Report****

PVC's competitive grants programs are the main mechanism for PVC to implement its strategy, and therefore it is critical for PVC to be able to demonstrate solid and convincing results from its grants programs. The office judges its success in achieving the objectives of its strategic plan by reporting annually on key performance indicators, which are related to its strategic objective and intermediate results. The impact and results achieved by the PVOs in the various grants programs in relation to these key indicators are consolidated by PVC and reported to USAID senior managers in an annual **Results Report**. This information is the foundation for the PVC's budget request and is incorporated into USAID's annual Results Report to Congress.

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